

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in regard to Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry "documentary" just days before the election. Sinclair's stations broadcast to one quarter of the American public. This is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. How is it in the public interest for primetime television to be preempted in order to show what amounts to a one-hour, one-sided, factually questionable political advertisement on behalf of the political party that already controls the White House and both houses of Congress? This comes awfully close to state-run propaganda, frankly.

Sinclair's actions clearly demonstrate why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the same company ought not to be allowed to buy up station after station in city after city until it effectively has a monopoly on opinion. American democracy is based upon a plurality of opinion and the all-important right of dissent. The license renewal process needs to regulate media ownership to prevent consolidation of media outlets and insure that a greater balance of informed voices is heard over the public airwaves. The kind of biased, manipulative maneuver Sinclair is marketing as "news" can only corrupt the American political process. Thank you for your time.